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The University of Montana

NEWS RELEASE

University Communications
Missoula, MT 59812
(406) 243-2522
(406) 243-4520 FAX

Oct. 3, 1996

UM PROFESSOR TESTIFIES ABOUT LIFE ON MARS--Nancy Hinman, assistant professor of geology, testified Sept. 25 before the U.S. Senate Subcommittee on Science, Space and Technology chaired by U.S. Sen. Conrad Burns. In her testimony, Hinman urged the subcommittee to continue researching the possibility of life on Mars, including more study here on earth to better understand the fossilization process. "The sheer breadth of inquiries fielded by the geology department in our small Montana city leaves no doubt that the findings have touched the imagination of our country," Hinman told the subcommittee. She added that fossil samples from Mars may be a better indicator of the geological history of the early planets because they haven't been "recycled" by plate tectonics. Hinman has been awarded NASA grants to study the prospect of life on Mars. A geochemist, Hinman has studied fossilized micro-organisms in Yellowstone National Park, Australia, Iceland and Scotland. For more information, call Hinman at 243-5277.

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